

Self-Regulated Learning Skill to Improve Students' Writing Competence for Junior High School

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ABSTRACT

In the digital era, the writing skill must be mastered by students to express their opinion and ideas. To stimulate students' awareness, motivation, belief, and knowledge of the quality of students' writing, it can be used Self-Regulated Learning (SRL). This study aims to investigate whether SRL can increase students' composition. It was quasi-experimental research that the data was obtained by using pre-test and post-test in one group. SPSS and independent sample t-test was used to analyse the data. The findings confirmed that students' composition could improve after they have learned writing using SRL. It was known that the sig. (2-Tailed) a value that is 0.000 and it is less than 0.05. It can be said that there is a statistical difference between the mean of pre-test and post-test. In sum up, the students got better after they learn writing using SRL. It is recommended to encourage students' writing skills by implementing innovative strategies that facilitate and engage students in learning writing.

Keywords: Self-regulated learning, strategy, writing, assessing

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, every student must master writing skills since it is very useful for their daily life. By acquiring writing skills, students can express their opinion, comments, plan, or ideas in written language that cannot be done by verbal action on certain conditions [1] [2]. Furthermore, writing can also improve students' critical and creative thinking because they are able to communicate from different platforms and perspectives [3] [4]. It allows students to communicate, yet written communication in any language with the pertinence of the technology—the internet, is still a trend nowadays.

Apart from communication, in academic field writing has an important role. Writing, currently in the education aspect, has become an indispensable skill as the student transition from high school students into a university student. Furthermore, writing is portable and permanent which means, it makes your idea visible or appears. Also, writing could express who you are as a person. Without this skill, it is very hard to endure in the competitive atmosphere of the school.

In addition, when students learning writing, it has several steps that must be followed by students in order to get maximal output or students are able to write good composition. The first step is planning. In this step, students must have an idea or a plan or a topic what they are going to write and decide a topic to be written in their composition. After that, students must elaborate their ideas into their writing in the form of sentences to support their ideas so that it will produce a draft

composition. This step is called drafting. When they have finished their drafting, students must read again their work to check and correct some problems emerging in drafting such as grammar, usage, word choice, and punctuation. It is called editing session that step motivate students to find mistakes and correct it. Next, students will revise their drafting and reach the final one. When students have reached all the process, the writing product can be called a final version. It is the last step called the final version.

In writing text, there are some components that must be achieved, and it is called an assessment considered as an important activity to help students develop their writing skills [6]. By conducting a good assessment will reflect students' work and students' specific level of proficiency to measure students' competence and ability. Assessment is a set of criteria that must be identified and applied consistently to each students' work of writing in order to be objective and reduce teacher bias and increase the value of writing [7].

Writing rubric components is consisted of content, an organization the idea, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics [7]. Content is developing an idea that is related to the topic. Good content will engage the readers more. The next is an organization idea that is considered an important factor in writing because students must know what they are going to write. Constructing the idea is the first step in writing when students choose a certain topic. A good arrangement of the idea is important to produce good writing started by the introduction or opening, body, and conclusion or closing. It will make the reader easy to follow what is on the writer's mind. Grammar is the way words taken place in a sentence. Without the rule of grammar, the communicative form of

writing cannot be built because the reader will have a difficulty in understanding the passage. Choosing proper diction is important to a writer to express their writing better. It means that having many vocabularies could help the writer in choosing the diction. Also, it could enrich the literary and cultural values of a writing text. The last component is mechanic that is the way writers write using the rules of written language; such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling that is needed to communicate the ideas clearly.

It can be said that the process to learn writing skills usually takes more time and requires a lot of knowledge than the other skills. This skill cannot be easily enhanced so that students need to learn step by step before they can compose good writing. Before the students could produce a text, they must read many kinds of texts that help them to get ideas. By implementing reading a lot, students will get a lot of ideas or opinion that can be transferred in their writing. It is stated that there is a link between reading and writing. Knowing the long process how to get ideas and how to produce good composition, most of students have opinion that writing is the most complex and difficult skill in every level of education. They think that they must do some activities to find out ideas. Therefore, most students said that they cannot write well since they do not have enough vocabulary, or they have a lack of background knowledge to write text. Moreover, the teacher does not use a strategy that guides them on how to write passage step by step. During the process of teaching-learning, teachers just provide several topics and ask students to write a composition based on their chosen topic. She rarely optimizes some skills to help them in the writing process. Finally, students think that writing is a very difficult subject and they do not have any motivation to write. Most of them must find their own way to learn writing and they are unsuccessful to find such a thing.

To help students become better writers, a teacher can use a strategy that can motivate students to be good writers and persuade them into having ideas [5, p. 162]. One of the strategies that can be implemented is Self-Regulated Learning (SRL). It is known that SRL is a learning skill that mixes the teaching learning writing process. During learning writing, students must follow several activities to develop or improve their writing skills. Initially, students must set their goal. Here, students must decide topic and find several books, information or article to support their ideas and are written in drafting. Next, it is self-assessment that motivate students to assess or evaluate their writing. The last, it is self-reinforcement that encourage students to be brave and be confident to publish their final composition. [2]. SRL could also stimulate awareness of the quality of students' knowledge, motivation, beliefs, and cognitive ability [9]. There are three essential regulatory strategies that can be distinguished: (a) Planning, consists of selecting suitable cognitive strategies based on a specific task; (b) Monitoring comprises of the comprehension

and task performance; and (c) Evaluation involves the ability to assess the quality of the products and the efficiency of the learning process [9].

By implementing SRL, the teacher provides several materials that are easily accessed by students. The teacher always motivates students to be independent learners. He facilitates students how find out ideas, develop their ideas and write ideas into drafting. In writing class, the class must be enjoyable for students so that students do not feel anxiety and apprehensive. They must be relax and happy during the process of learning writing in order to find out good ideas. It is described when a teacher applies SRL, learners are very active to use resources provide by their teacher. The students have a high motivation and belief about their capabilities among the successfulness of the learning process [10]. The students also learn how to organize the information before it was written their draft. The use of SRL is expected to help learners to control and understand the learning environment and could achieve the academic better since they could predict their final writing course grade [11]. Learning experiences also engaged in this skill from their emotion, thoughts, and behaviours in order to achieve good results. Thus, it will enable students to understand the cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors of learning [3]. For this reason, students could make a better learning atmosphere, create good habits, strengthen their skills, monitor their ability, enhancing the academic outcomes, and evaluate their performance by themselves. If the students accommodate a self-regulation better when they learn writing, it can improve their motivation and reduce their anxiety related to academic tasks [10]. Moreover, the motivational aspect can bring a big impact on students' learning outcomes which is important for students. The process itself is activated when the actions and processes of students' learning are headed into the gaining of information nor skills [12].

Related to the use of SRL in learning writing, there are some previous study that is concerned about it. It is showed that the implementation of SRL in the classroom can help students to understand better and encourage students to be more focused. As a result, it can improve students' English skills and help them to prepare a more challenging task. The teacher can optimize students' experience to achieve their greatest success [12]. Another study said that SRL gave a significant effect on the students' competence in writing skills especially writing essay text. Students who are in eighth grade are positively engaged in the process of writing essay text and they can optimize their writing skills since they are very interested in learning writing about Self-regulated development in writing skills [2]. In addition, SRL can improve university EFL students' academic writing. It was known that SRL gave a positive impact on the students' attitude when they were learning academic writing. SRL can help a teacher to enhance students' academic performance [11].

Based on the explanation above, this study would focus on the use of SRL to increase students' writing competence for Junior High School. It is assumed by implementing SRL in the process of teaching-learning writing, the students can develop their writing skills and finally their writing performance will be better, especially in writing descriptive text components, incorporating the applicable criteria that follow.

2. METHODS

It was a quasi-experimental design to answer the research question "Can SRL improve students' writing competence for Junior High School Students?". There was one group in this study that was given pre-test and post-test design. It was also given treatment between pre-test and post-test. Figure 1 described the procedure of this research.



Figure 1. Research procedure

Based on the figure 1, it was known that this study had one group research. Before the group was given treatment, they would be given pre-test in order to know the students' competence. Next, the treatment was conducted for several meetings and at the end of this session, it would be given post-test. Then, it would be calculated the students' score in writing to decide whether there was an improvement or not.

The instrument was a written test that asked students to write a descriptive text. Moreover, it was also used writing rubric to assess the students' composition based on Brown's opinion [13]. The setting was in one of SMP (public junior high schools) in Mojokerto, East Java, Indonesia that is not too far from Surabaya, it was about 25 kilometers. The participants were students who were in seven grade and the total number was 32 students consisting of 14 male and 18 female students. All of them were at the same level of comprehension in the English language.

There were some procedures to conduct this study. First, after getting permission, it was conducted pre-test that asked participants to write a descriptive text. Then, the participants would be given treatment for 6 sessions and every session lasted for 80 minutes. In SRL, there are three stages to activate this skill, such as; preparatory, performance, and reflection [12]. In the preparatory stage, the teacher provided an example of descriptive text and asked students to classify title, identification, and description using a graphic organizer. Furthermore,

students are asked to identify the language features that must be done in a group. After all the information have been got, they were asked to discuss and present it in front of the class. Next, the students were provided descriptive text completed by pictures did the same activities but it must be done individually.

The next step was the performance stage that was the students must be able to write a descriptive text. In this stage, students must choose a topic provided by the teacher, then they must draft their topic using a graphic organizer. After that, the students continued to write their composition.

The last step is reflection. Here students presented their composition and the teacher gave feedback toward their composition based on the writing rubric. Then, it would be revised, and their final composition would be assessed and given a score. After the treatment was ended, both of the groups would be given a post-test.

Since the data were in the form of a number, it would be analysed using SPSS 20 using a paired sample t-test. If the t-value was less than 0.005 it could be said that there was an improvement toward the students' writing skill so that the alternate hypothesis (H1) could be accepted.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the data analysis, it was known the results of students' writing skills between pre-test and post-test in table 1.

Table 1. Paired samples statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	41.3750	32	11.11160	1.98427
	Post-test	76.3750	32	14.80573	2.61731

It can be seen from the data in table 1 that the mean score of the pre-test is 41.375 ($SD=11.11160$) while the mean score of the post-test is 76.375 ($SD=14.80573$). From the results obtained it can be said the means score of post-test is higher than the pre-test. Therefore, the results of post-test reported significantly increasing after students receive the treatments given by the researcher. It was also used a paired sample t-test to know their t-value. It was a kind of proven if there was an improvement on students' writing competence.

Table 2. Paired sample t-test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Posttest - pretest	35.00000	14.96663	2.64575	29.60395	40.39605	13.229	31	.000

As shown in table 2, it is known that the Significant (2-tailed) value is .000. It is said that the value in the Sig. (2-tailed) is equal to or less than 0.05. There was a significant difference in the mean score of the two groups. It is supported by Pallant [8] that states if the value in the Sig. (2-tailed) is equal to or less than .05. There is a significant improvement in writing composition after students have learned writing using SRL. Finally, the use of SRL in learning writing descriptive text can improve students' writing skills.

The analysis of the data revealed that the post-test mean score is higher than the pre-test. It is supported by the result of the paired sample t-test that shows the Significant (2-tailed) value is .000. It means it is equal or less than .05 so that there was a significant difference. It is said if students optimize self-regulated learning, it could achieve the academic result better [11]. By implementing SRL, their academic writing improved since the teacher could create a good environment of learning. Moreover, the teacher also encourages students to deal with the assignment by themselves and provide materials that are easily engaged. It is showed by the result of this study that the students got a higher score on this material after they are optimizing this skill on the learning process results.

It is also stated that self-regulated learning skills would have a positive impact on his subject of study [2]. Self-regulated learning would give a significant increase in students' result. SRL is also the active to improve students' writing descriptive text since SRL teaching-learning side students' learning during formal schooling, but also guide them after students left their formal education or outside the classroom. By implementing the use of SRL during the process of teaching learning, teacher and students may experience better academic achievement and life-long learning. Promoting self-regulated learning skill can help the students to prepare for a challenging learning tasks and assessments [12]. Therefore, self-regulated learning skill have positive effect to improve students' writing descriptive text.

4. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that self-regulated learning could improve students' writing skills. SRL also provided and guided students in the process of writing when they learned writing. By using SRL, the teacher may have a high chance to promote high academic achievement and motivation. It is suggested that the teacher must create a powerful learning environment and inspire students to design their own learning experience.

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